

# SECRETS OF SCOTLAND YARD

BY SIR BASIL THOMSON  
Chief of British Criminal Investigation Department  
1913-1921

By Sir Basil Thomson.  
(Chief of the Yard Since 1913.)

## War Spies Who Posed as Salesmen.

The words, "I write from 201," in a letter written in secret ink proved a successful clue to the arrest of Muller.  
A large proportion of detected spies were professional musicians.  
Thomson recognized the handwriting on Buschman's passport as that of Floren, a German spy instructor.

### CHAPTER IX.

EARLY in 1915 the Germans began to organize spy receiving offices in Holland. Usually they pretended to be legitimate commercial agencies. Sometimes one member of a not too prosperous firm of commission agents would lend his offices for the purpose; sometimes a "business" was opened in some room, where a few samples of cheap cigars and other goods were on view. Quite early in the year it was discovered that some foreigner who could write fluent English was sending regular communications to one of these addresses in a simple secret ink and it was evident that he was the sort of person who would find out something which might at any time be of great use to the enemy.



Like all spies he was continually demanding money and it was hoped for some time that a remittance from Holland would disclose his identity but in the end the denouement came about in quite another way. A letter was intercepted in the Censorship which disclosed secret writing. It was not in the usual hand and the incriminatory words said that "C" had come to Newcastle and that the writer was sending the communication "from 201" instead.

I remember very well the morning when this sentence was shown to me. The postmark was Deptford. "201" might or might not be the number of a house. We rang up Deptford Police Station and asked for a list of the streets in their area which ran to two hundred and one houses. There was only one—Deptford High Street—and the occupant of that house had a German name, "Peter Hahn, Baker and Confectioner."

No one was more surprised than the stout little baker when a taxi deposited a number of police officers at his door. He proved to be a British subject and to have been released from Deptford for some years. While he was being put into the cab a search was made of his premises, and in a back room the police found a complete outfit for secret writing neatly stowed away in a cardboard box.

Hahn's Russian Visitor.  
When seated in my armchair Hahn was not at all communicative. He professed to know nothing of "C," and when further pressed he refused to answer any questions, but patient in-

quity among his neighbors produced a witness who remembered that a tall Russian gentleman had been visiting Hahn at frequent intervals.  
His name was believed to be Muller and his address a boarding house in Bloomsbury. This limited the field of search. The register of every boarding house was scrutinized and within a few hours the police found the name of Muller; the landlady of the boarding house confirmed the suggestion that he was a Russian and said that he had lately gone to Newcastle to see some friends. The search was then transferred to Newcastle and within a few hours Muller was found, arrested and brought to London.

An inquiry into his past showed that he was one of those cosmopolitan, roving Germans who are hotel-keepers in one place, commercial travellers in another. At some time they have all been motor-car agents and tourists.

Hahn, on the other hand, was merely a tool.  
**SPY LEYTER'S CONFESSION.**  
About the middle of 1915 we learned that on a steamer bound from Rotterdam to Buenos Ayres was an Argentine citizen named Conrad Leyter who was believed to be carrying despatches from Berlin to the German Embassy in Madrid. Leyter was removed from the steamer and brought to London. He said he was a shipping clerk, that he had come to Europe for a holiday and was now on his way back to Buenos Ayres. He gave a long and rather wearisome account of his holiday adventures in Germany and Holland and nothing could be done until the clockwork had run down.

Then we said, "But why were you going to Spain?" There was another burst of eloquence but no reply to that particular question. Whenever he paused for breath he was asked, "Why were you going to Spain?" At last he could bear it no more. He jumped from his chair and said, "Well, if you will know, I was going to Spain and if you know what I know, I am carrying a despatch to Prince Ratibor, the German Ambassador in Madrid."

"Thank you. And where is the despatch?"  
"I have not got it. It is sewn up in my lifebelt." There was another burst of eloquence but no reply to that particular question. Whenever he paused for breath he was asked, "Why were you going to Spain?" At last he could bear it no more. He jumped from his chair and said, "Well, if you will know, I was going to Spain and if you know what I know, I am carrying a despatch to Prince Ratibor, the German Ambassador in Madrid."

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Every now and then doubtful persons captured at sea came to us from far afield. In October, 1915, a boarding officer in the Mediterranean, who was examining passengers on board the blue-funnel liner Anchises, found

a man who was carrying a passport believed to be forged. He was detained and sent to Egypt.

In Cairo luck was against him. While he was being interrogated and his imagination was soaring in full flight, a British officer who had known him in former years chanced to pass through the room and recognized him. "Hullo, von Gumpenberg," he cried, slapping him on the back. After that it was useless to dissemble and he gave his name as Baron Otto von Gumpenberg, and said that he had been Squadron Commander in the Death's Head Hussars and had been involved in a scandal for which he was arrested and imprisoned for seven months. On his release he became a vagabond adventurer.

In Constantinople he was Alde de Camp to Enver Pasha; later he attached himself to Prince Wilhelm of Wied in his futile attempt to govern Albania.

When war broke out he was called back to Germany to serve as a trooper and, according to his own account, he served for eighteen months on the Russian front with such distinction that when he returned, wounded, to Germany his commission was restored to him and he was posted to the command of a troop at the front; but at this moment there happened to be a scheme for stirring up the tribes in North Africa and he was despatched to see what he could do with the Senussi.

**MANY MUSICIANS WERE SPIES.**  
During May and June, 1915, in about a fortnight no less than seven enemy spies were arrested. The most spectacular were Reginald Roland, whose real name was Georg T. Breckow and Mrs. Lizzie Wertheim. Breckow was the son of a piano-forte manufacturer in Stettin and he was himself a pianist. He spoke English and knew enough Americanisms to pose plausibly as a rich American travelling in England for his health. Before he left Holland he was furnished with the address of Lizzie Wertheim, a German woman who had married a naturalized German and had thus acquired British nationality.

Breckow, who appeared to be possessed of a considerable sum of money, was at once accorded a warm welcome. The pair hired horses from a riding school and rode in the park during the mornings. Mrs. Wertheim went to Scotland, hired a motor car and drove about the country picking up gossip about the Grand Fleet. Her questions to naval officers were, however, so imprudent that special measures were taken. Breckow's address was discovered and in due course the two were brought to New Scotland Yard for interrogation. The artistic temperament of Breckow was not equal to the ordeal. His pretense of being a rich American broke down immediately and he was agitated to find how much the police knew about his secret movements.

Lizzie Wertheim, on the other hand, was tough, brazen and impudent, claiming that as a British subject she had a right to travel where she would. She declined to sit still in her chair but walked up and down the room, flinging a large silk handkerchief as if she was practising a new dancing step.

When the detective arrived he said, "What have you against me? I will show you everything." Then he reeled off his lesson. He was in England for the purpose of selling cheese, bananas, potatoes, safety razors and odds and ends, and in France he had sold pteric acid, cloth and rifles.

There was also a letter from Gielist, the German General in Rotterdam; from Col. Osterlag, the German Military Attache in Holland, and from two persons who were known to be active in recruiting for the German Secret Service. He was tried at the Westminster Guildhall on Sept. 20, 1915, the day of the trial of Breckow and Mrs. Wertheim at the Old Bailey, and was sentenced to death. I know that persons who were present at the trial were impressed by his manly bearing and his frankness. After his sentence he was not separated from his violin. It was his great solace through the long hours of waiting. He asked for it again on his removal to the Tower on the night before his execution, and played till a late hour. When they came for him in the morning he picked it up and kissed it, saying, "Goodbye. I shall not want any more." He refused to have his eyes bandaged and faced the rifle with a courageous smile.

**HIS VIOLIN TO THE LAST.**  
Unfortunately for him he ran short of money and was compelled to write to Holland for fresh supplies. He was arrested at his lodgings in South Kensington and was found to be quite penniless.

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# POTASH & PERLMUTTER

(ABE) (MAWRUSS)  
Pertinent Comment On Important Events

The Problem of Election to the Four Hundred Is One That Is Puzzling Morris Till His Partner Explains.

And the Cost of a Yacht Is Another Item That Is Not Easily Covered as a Factor of Pleasure.

By Montague Glass.

THE idea of Exclusiveness, is, Mawruss, that there wouldn't be no object in the two million which makes up the Four Hundred being exclusive if the one hundred and eight million which is being excluded didn't know that they were excluded. Abe Potash observed one morning recently.



"Then I suppose the intention is that I should get awful sore when I read in the Society Notes:

"Mr. and Mrs. Sig. J. Astor entertained at dinner at the Dark Brown Room at the Ritz-Autamat last evening in honor of Hattie, Countess of Stepeny."

Morris Perlmutter said, "because not only I ain't mentioned among the list of guests, but also when Mr. and Mrs. Astor was considering who to invite, they didn't so much as say 'How about asking the Perlmutters?'"

"Well, nobody expects you would get sore exactly," Abe said, "but if it wasn't for the fact that practically 100 per cent. of the people who reads Society Notes in the daily newspapers know that they ain't got a Chinaman's chance of ever being invited to Society affairs, Mawruss, it would take a whole lot of the kick out of getting publicity for such affairs, y'understand."

"In fact, Mawruss, this here Society proposition is one where the pleasure of keeping other people OUT is what makes most Society people so tickled to be in."

"Well, they shouldn't be tickled on my account, Abe, because I not only don't want to get in, but if I thought there was any danger of it (which there ain't), I would move out West or somewhere where there ain't no Society," Morris said.

"Say! There's just so much Society out West as there is in New York and more even," Abe declared. "Which the Four Hundred idea has spread all over the country even to places where they've been obliged to mark the Four Hundred down to Forty on account of the entire population not being much over four hundred."

"And who elects them?" Morris asked.

**HOW THE 400 STARTS.**  
"What do you mean—elects them?" Abe retorted. "They don't get elected."

"Then what do they get—a franchise from the original Four Hundred in New York City?" Morris inquired.

"What do you think the members of the Four Hundred are, anyway?" Abe asked. "Kioo Kluxers?"

"I should know what they are!" Morris exclaimed. "I heard tell of the Four Hundred all my life, and this is the first time I ever stopped to

and the least suspicion of that would be enough to defeat the whole plan. Lawton would rather submit to recapture than risk putting his enemy into the hands of the police. Thorne was quite certain on this point. If he once suspected that he was being given a modified liberty to lead the pack to the hidden fox, he was perfectly capable of walking out boldly and surrendering."

After dark they risked going out cautiously and followed the road to a block of stores and flats half a mile nearer town, where they bought papers and food. Back in their refuge they read the brief accounts of the escape, Lawton with amusement and Thorne with approval. The story the warden had given to the reporters was admirably calculated to reassure Lawton. It laid the blame entirely on the prisoner Kane, who was held responsible for having made the plan and corrupted Lawton, whose record heretofore had been so excellent as to make it probable that he had merely yielded to the temptation of the moment. The account foretold a speedy recapture, and closed with a resume of the crimes for which both men had been imprisoned, stressing particularly that of Lawton, involving the famous Timothy Parrot. One report had hazarded a guess that Parrot had helped in the escape, at which

Lawton laughed aloud.

"He's shaking in his shoes, right now," he said grimly. "He'd better! When I get my hands on him!"

"What's the sense of rubbing a guy like that out?" objected Thorne. "If you turned him up to the bulls he'd get at least a thousand years on his own confessions. If you bump him off he's out of reach for keeps and there's a nice little chance of the chair for us. I'm game to go after him, all right, but I don't want any killing or I kill right here—see?"

Lawton shrugged. "There isn't got to be any killing, Kane. But I've got to have my chance at him—with my hands. You can't understand it; it's something outside the job he framed on me. Aren't you wise, yet, about that? He made that play simply to get me put away; it looked as if I'd been in on it with him, and his letter to the police, that got me nabbed, while it wasn't admitted as evidence, of course, cooked my chances in advance. He had me framed as hard and fast as he had you. Why? Because he knew that I was going to get him mighty soon if he didn't! It was self-defense, that frame-up. He had plenty of reason to know I was closing in on him, and plenty of reason to be afraid of what would happen when I did."

"But you know where he is now."

"I don't know. Let it go at that. Don't speak of it again!" Thorne was amazed at the change in the other man. Normally Lawton conveyed an impression of something tense and deadly; there was a hint of the crouching panther in the man's repressed strength and the smoldering ferocity of his eyes, sheltered by the heavy, lowering brows. Now stark hatred fairly radiated from him; he seemed to glow with the heat of it as iron reds in the flame.

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(Another instalment Monday.)

## ON THE "400" AND THE 110,000,000

"THIS is the first time I ever stopped to consider whether the members were elected to it, appointed to it or sentenced to it. I don't give a nickel whether the Four Hundred has got an initiation fee and annual dues or just assessments when a member dies."

"As the rest of the people always refuse to look up to them they start in to look down on the rest of the people, and that's the way it starts."

"Most of them is so near-sighted when it comes to distance in relations that they couldn't see as far as their own brothers and sisters even."

"A Four Hundred Millionaire can get the same sensation out of a cruise in the West Indies as you and me got twenty-five years ago on the old 4,000-ton steamer Rheumatic."

"They've got to enter their boy in one of them high-toned boys' schools six months before he is born, otherwise he gets notice for the baby class six weeks after he has eloped with a member of the chorus of the Follies of 1945."



consider whether the members were elected to it, appointed to it or sentenced to it, after I have considered it, Abe, I find that I don't give a nickel whether the Four Hundred has got an initiation fee and annual dues or just assessments when a member dies."

"You don't suppose there is any death benefits attached to being a member of the Four Hundred, do you?" Abe asked.

"Nor any other benefits neither, so far as I could see," Morris hastened to say.

"Only their neighbors!" Abe exclaimed. "In other words, Abe, they think it's high toned to act like they were ashamed of their neighbors," Morris said.

"Run no chances on American accent."

"I'll bet there is times when one of them Four Hundred millionaires which is having a particularly bad private yacht cruise wishes that he had been black-balled when he was put up for membership in that mebeugene bunch," Morris observed.

"And then what troubles them Four Hundred people has got with their children doch," he continued. "Take the ordinary family, Mawruss, and when the children gets to be old enough, y'understand, the most trouble the parents has got getting them into school is maybe they ain't been an issue of school bonds voted on in such a long time that little Benny has got to be put in a part time class, understand me."

"But with the Four Hundred parents, Mawruss, they've got to enter their boy in one of them high-toned boys' schools six months before he is born, otherwise he is put on a waiting list and the headmaster notifies them to send the boy to the baby class six weeks after he has eloped with a member of the chorus of the 'Follies of 1945.'"

"You mean that the public schools ain't good enough for the families of the Four Hundred?" Morris asked.

"A question!" Abe exclaimed. "Do you suppose them Four Hundred parents is going to run a chance of having their children getting an American accent that they couldn't shake off in after life?"

"But they're Americans, ain't they?" Morris said.

"Only by birth," Abe said, "but they get their education in schools which has got forms instead of graduates and headmasters instead of principals."

"Why don't them Four Hundred parents finance Oxford University in opening a New York branch, and be done with it?" Morris observed.

**EAST SIDERS THREATEN HARBOR ACCENT.**

"Well, if a Four Hundred boy is careful not to make hawrussa with the wrong people, Mawruss, he could get practically the same tongue-tied way of talking in Harvard as he could in Oxford," Abe declared. "Particularly as 's' and 'z' in the paper the other day where there is a movement on foot among graduates of Harvard not to let no more of the lower classes get in there."

"It seems that quite a few young fellers has been going to Harvard recently from the East Side of New York and the South End of Boston, Mawruss, and they've had such an effect on some of the other students that when several of them went home to Chicago and Kansas City, for all their parents could tell from the way they spoke, they might just as well have sent them to the University of Michigan, or even, Gott soll huten, Cornell."

"All of which goes to prove, Abe," Morris concluded, "that it's a tough job keeping the Four Hundred apart from the One Hundred and Ten Million."

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**MAN, WIFE AND SIX-ASSORTED DOGS.**

"The members of the Four Hundred knows that as well as you do, Mawruss, and they act accordingly," Abe said, "which now take the Four Hundred in New York, and the members all act like they thought it was terrible that they had to live in New

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# FALSE FACES

by HUGH KAHLER  
ILLUSTRATED BY WILL B. JOHNSTONE

## OUTSIDE THE BARS.

"PLEASED to meet you," he said. His voice was husky and the tone of it and the banal choice of his phrase helped to make his masquerade convincing. The girl greeted him with a distinct hint of aloofness in her tone, a condescension which was kindly enough, and yet somehow contrived to impress it upon Tom Kane, escaped convict, that there was a vast difference between him and such a convict as Dan Lawton.

He repressed a sudden, silly impulse to laugh. After all, it was funny. To steer clear of women for years and years only to lose his head at the last of it, on the strength of a casual glance or two, to a girl who belonged by her own choice on the other side of the line which divides the just from the unjust! It might easily be his duty to "bring in" Esther Lawton one of these days. He wondered, suddenly, whether he would do it if it came to that.

"Come in, Mr. Kane," said the girl, quietly. "Father will look after you while I get rid of this car. You'll find something to eat in—"

"Couldn't we do it for you, Miss Lawton?" Thorne heard his voice with a sense of amazed disapproval.

The girl stared. "Scarcely, unless you're anxious to go back so soon. You've got to keep very much out of sight for the present. I'll see you later, perhaps. Good-night, Dada. Be careful, won't you? No needless risks? Promise?"

Lawton laughed. "No risks at all, Esther. Certainty or nothing. Be sure of it."

She resumed her seat at the wheel and the car moved into the night.

**WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY.**  
**TIMOTHY PARROT**, a crook who had committed many crimes without arrest and who has been taunting the police with anonymous letters.

**TOM THORNE**, most successful detective in the Bureau—known as "The Tracker."

**MCMAMARA**, also a star detective at Headquarters—somewhat jealous of Thorne.

**J. B. SMITH**—shot in a bachelor apartment building, who makes a statement to the police before he dies and requests a private talk with the Tracker.

**RAWLINGS**, an alias of the Parrot, who wiped Smith out because he read a note reading something like this—"You can't hide from me, Timothy Parrot, anywhere under the sun . . . One year more, Parrot, before you pay for Dora